

Amendments to the Claims:

This listing of claims replaces all prior versions and listings of claims in the application:

Listing of Claims:

1. (Previously Presented) A system for providing availability answers for seating on an airline flight, the system comprises:

an availability predictor that produces a predicted answer for seating availability on a competitive flight to the airline flight;

an availability system that produces an actual availability answer for the airline flight;
and

a computing system that includes decision logic to produce a decision with respect to the actual availability answer from the availability system based on comparing the predicted answer from the availability predictor and the actual availability answer from the availability system.

2. (Previously Presented) The system of claim 1 wherein the availability predictor predicts seating availability of the competitive flight of a competitor of an entity associated with the availability system, and the decision logic produces a bias that determines whether the actual availability answer from the availability system should be modified based upon a relative competitive position of the competitor to the entity associated with the availability system.

3. (Previously Presented) The system of claim 1 further comprising:

modifying logic that is responsive to the actual availability answer from the availability system and from the bias from the decision logic to modify the actual availability answer in accordance with the bias.

4. (Previously Presented) The system of claim 1 wherein the decision logic determines whether the prediction from the availability predictor indicates that a competitor corresponding to the availability predictor is in a more favorable or less favorable competitive position than a position corresponding to the actual availability answer produced by the availability system.

5. (Previously Presented) The system of claim 1 wherein the actual availability answer is dependent on the decision from the decision logic.

6. (Previously Presented) The system of claim 1 wherein the decision from the decision logic has a plurality of states.

7. (Previously Presented) The system of claim 6 wherein one of the states is a neutral state that does not tend to modify the answer received from the availability system.

8. (Previously Presented) The system of claim 6 wherein one of states biases the actual availability answer towards answering that a seat is available.

9. (Previously Presented) The system of claim 6 wherein one of states biases the actual availability answer towards answering that a seat is not available.

10. (Previously Presented) The system of claim 6 wherein a value of the state depends upon the relative competitive position of the competitor represented by the availability predictor.

11. (Previously Presented) The system of claim 3 wherein the decision logic further comprises logic to determine whether the competitor's available booking codes are at a lower price than those that the availability system indicates the user of the system can offer.

12. (Previously Presented) The system of claim 11 wherein if the decision logic determines that the competitor's available booking codes are not at a lower price, then the system can return a bias towards making the seat unavailable.

13. (Previously Presented) The system of claim 12 wherein the system receives a travel planning query, and if the decision logic determines that the competitor's available booking codes are not at a lower price, then the system tests whether the travel planning query was for a low cost fare and return a bias towards making the seat not available if the query was for a low cost fare.

14. (Previously Presented) The system of claim 11 wherein if the decision logic determines that the competitor's available booking codes are at a lower price than those being offered by the user of the system, the system returns a bias towards making the seat available.

15. (Previously Presented) The system of claim 11 wherein the system receives a travel planning query, and if the decision logic determines that the competitor's available booking codes are at a lower price than those being offered by the user of the system, the system determines whether the travel planning query was for a high cost fare, and returns a bias towards making the seat available if for a high cost fare.

16. (Previously Presented) The system of claim 1 wherein the decision returned changes the actual availability answer from the availability system.

17. (Currently Amended) A method executed on a computer system the method, comprises:

- receiving by the computer system a request for availability of seating on an airline flight;
- executing in the computer system an algorithm to produce a predicted answer that predicts seating availability on a flight that is a competitive flight to the airline flight;

determining in the computer system an actual availability answer for the airline flight;
~~and~~
comparing the predicted answer from the algorithm and the ~~the~~ actual availability answer
from the availability system to establish a decision with respect to the actual availability answer;
and
modifying the actual availability answer if indicated by the decision.

18. (Currently Amended) The method of claim 17 wherein comparing produces a decision that is a bias that determines whether the ~~the~~ actual availability answer should be modified based upon the relative competitive position of the competitor represented by the availability predictor, before the actual availability answer is returned in response to the request.

19. (Previously Presented) The method of claim 17 further comprising:
modifying the actual availability answer in accordance with the bias.

20. (Previously Presented) The method of claim 17 further comprising:
determining whether the competitor's available booking codes are at a lower price than those which the availability system indicates the user of the system can offer.

21. (Currently Amended) A computer program product residing on a computer readable medium for determining relative availability of seating on an airline flight, comprises instructions for causing a computing device to:

produce an actual availability answer for a flight;
determine a predicted answer for seating availability on a competitor's flight that is a competitive flight to the airline flight;
compare the predicted answer and the actual availability answer to ~~to~~-determine if the actual seat availability answer should be modified; and
modify the actual availability answer if indicated by the compare instructions.

22. (Previously Presented) The computer program product of claim 21 wherein the instructions to compare, biases the actual availability answer based upon a relative competitive position of the competitor according to the predicted answer.

23. (Previously Presented) The computer program product of claim 21 instructions to modify further comprising instructions to:

modify the actual availability answer in response to the predicted answer to produce the actual availability answer.

24. (Previously Presented) The computer program product of claim 21 wherein the instructions to compare comprise instructions to:

determine whether the predicted answer indicates that a competitor is in a more favorable or less favorable competitive position than the actual availability answer produced by the availability system.

25. (Previously Presented) The computer program product of claim 21 wherein comparing produces a decision with respect to the actual availability answer, the decision having a plurality of states.

26. (Previously Presented) The computer program product of claim 25 wherein the one of the states is a neutral state that is does not tend to modify the actual availability answer received from the availability system.

27. (Previously Presented) The computer program product of claim 25 wherein the one of states biases the actual availability answer towards producing the actual availability answer that a seat is available.

28. (Previously Presented) The computer program product of claim 25 wherein one of states biases the actual availability answer towards producing the actual answer that a seat is not available.

29. (Previously Presented) The computer program product of claim 21 wherein the instructions to compare determines whether the competitor's available booking codes are at a lower price than those that the user of the product can offer.

30. (Previously Presented) The computer program product of claim 29 wherein if the competitor's available booking codes are not at a lower price, then the instructions return a bias towards making the seat unavailable.

Claim 31 is canceled.

32. (Previously Presented) The computer program product of claim 29 wherein if the competitor's available booking codes are at a lower price than those being offered by the user of the program, the instructions return a bias towards making the seat available.

33. (Previously Presented) A computer program product residing on a computer readable medium for determining relative availability of seating on an airline flight, the product comprising instructions for causing a computing device to:

determine a predicted answer for seating availability on a competitor's flight that is a competitive flight to an airline flight;

compare the predicted answer and an actual availability answer to determine if the actual seat availability answer should be modified; and

modify the actual availability answer in accordance with the compare instructions.

34. (Previously Presented) The computer program product of claim 33 wherein the instructions to compare, bias the actual availability answer based upon a relative competitive position of the competitor according to the predicted answer.

35. (Previously Presented) The computer program product of claim 33 wherein the instructions to compare comprise instructions to:

determine whether the predicted answer indicates that a competitor is in a more favorable or less favorable competitive position than the actual availability answer produced by the availability system.

36. (Previously Presented) The computer program product of claim 33 wherein comparing produces a decision with respect to the actual availability answer, the decision having a plurality of states.

37. (Previously Presented) The computer program product of claim 33 wherein the instructions to compare determines whether the competitor's available booking codes are at a lower price than those that the user of the product can offer.